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SNOW SURVEYS AND IRRIGATION WATER FORECASTS  
GILA AND SALT RIVER DRAINAGES IN ARIZONA

Special Supplemental Report

March 15, 1944

Precipitation: Generally over the watersheds of the Salt and Gila rivers the precipitation since the first of the month has been above normal. Weather in the McNary area has been cloudy with wind and rising temperature. In this section of the State the streams are carrying a good head of roily water. Soil saturated since about the first of the month, a condition favorable to above-normal runoff. Snowing in the higher elevations on the 15th, Springerville area.

Snow Cover: The present snow cover in both the Alpine and McNary areas is much improved over that of a year ago, particularly at McNary, where the water content is now 6 inches as compared with nil last year at this time. Mountain peaks at the higher elevations are now well covered with snow. Conditions over the watersheds of the Agua Fria and Verde rivers in the Prescott National Forest are very favorable with heavy snow cover above 7,500 feet, melting slowly. soil wet to boggy with above normal runoff during the past two weeks.

Reservoir Storage: The net storage in the principal reservoirs on the Salt River, March 13, was about 1,160,000 acre-feet of water as compared with 1,474,000 a year ago, or about 80 percent. The average inflow during the past couple of weeks has been about 8,000 acre-feet per day. A very substantial accumulation of water has been received in Lake Pleasant bringing the storage now to 24,000 acre-feet. For the San Carlos reservoir, since the first of the month, there has been a net gain of 2,300 acre-feet to a total of 282,000 in storage. This amount is just one-half that of a year ago. The gain in storage in these several reservoirs totals approximately 125,000 acre-feet since March first.

Water Supply Outlook: Since the first of the month the outlook for the coming irrigation season has improved due to the fairly heavy runoff resulting from the recent general storms over the mountain watersheds of the Salt, Agua Fria and Verde. Soil moisture and range conditions have been improved and because of near saturation of the soil in these areas, the runoff from the snow cover should be proportionally better than in former years.

Summary of Snow Surveys, March 15, 1944

Snow Course	Location	Drainage	Snow Depth			Water Content		
			Inches			Inches		
			March 15			March 15		
			1942	1943	1944	1942	1943	1944
Frisco Divide	6m.S.Luna	Blue R.	9.4	6.0	9.1	2.0	2.0	2.2
State Line	5m. W. Luna	"	9.6	0.0	7.7	2.3	0.0	2.5
Nutriso	4m. N. Alpine	San Fran. R.	5.0	0.0	7.9	1.8	0.0	1.8
Beaver Head	11mi.SW.Alpine	Castle Cr.	12.1	0.0	5.2	3.9	0.0	1.1
Coronado Trail	4m.S.Alpine	Coleman Cr.	12.8	1.3	7.5	4.5	0.1	2.2
Taylor Creek	13mi.NW.Chloride	Gila River	1.3	--	--	0.1	--	--
McNary	3m.NW.McNary	Salt R.	9.3	0.0	15.8	1.2	0.0	6.0
Forest Dale	5m.SW.Showlow	" "	4.2	0.0	2.0	0.5	0.0	0.7
Milk Ranch	4mi.W.McNary	" "	6.1	0.0	7.8	1.0	0.0	2.6
		Average	8.6	0.9	7.9	2.2	0.3	2.4

This report was issued at Fort Collins, Colorado, March 18, 1944, by the Division of Irrigation, Soil Conservation Service, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Indian Service, the U.S. Weather Bureau, the Salt River Valley Water Users' Association, San Carlos Irrigation and Drainage District and other local irrigation interests of Arizona.

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